

NOVEMBER 23, 1976

AMERICA IN TRANSITION--SOME REFLECTIONS

ANNCR: NEWS ANALYST FRED GALVAN REFLECTS ON SOME ASPECTS OF THE FORD-CARTER TRANSITION PERIOD.

VOICE: FOR THE PAST TWO DAYS, THIS NATION'S ATTENTION HAS BEEN FOCUSED ON WASHINGTON WHERE PRESIDENT FORD AND PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER HAVE MET. AND THE IMPRESSION BOTH MEN HAVE LEFT ON THEIR FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN IS THAT THIS TRANSITION FROM A REPUBLICAN TO A DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION MAY WELL GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS ONE OF THE SMOOTHEST ON RECORD.

THAT THIS SHOULD HAPPEN AT THIS JUNCTURE IN AMERICA'S HISTORY IN ITSELF IS SOMETHING OF A TRIUMPH FOR BOTH MEN DIRECTLY INVOLVED. FOR, AS THE NEW YORK TIMES' VETERAN WASHINGTON REPORTER HEDRICK SMITH POINTS OUT: "AFTER THE TRAUMAS OF THE VIETNAM WAR AND WATERGATE, PRESIDENT FORD'S CALM, CORDIAL RECEPTION AT THE WHITE HOUSE FOR JIMMY CARTER WAS ALMOST ANTICLIMACTIC, A SYMBOL OF AMERICAN POLITICS RETURNED TO NORMAL."

THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER TRANSITIONS, SOME MORE CORDIAL THAN OTHERS, BUT IT IS FAIR TO SAY NONE AS FRIENDLY AND WARM AS THIS ONE. BUT LOOKING BACK OVER THOSE TRANSFERS OF POWER, THERE IS A COMMON THREAD THAT RAN THROUGH THEM--A THREAD EVIDENT IN THIS ONE, TOO. IT IS THAT THE INCUMBENT PRESIDENT HAS PASSED ON TO HIS SUCCESSOR FOREIGN POLICIES AND PROBLEMS WITH WHICH THE NEW WHITE HOUSE OCCUPANT HAS HAD TO DEAL ON A SHORT-RANGE AND LONG-RANGE BASIS.

FOR EXAMPLE, PRESIDENT TRUMAN PASSED ON TO PRESIDENT EISENHOWER THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM OF THE FIGHTING IN THE KOREAN WAR--ONE WHICH MISTER EISENHOWER WAS ABLE TO RESOLVE WITHIN A RELATIVELY SHORT TIME. AT THE SAME TIME, MISTER

TRUMAN PROVIDED HIS SUCCESSOR WITH THE BEGINNINGS OF A NETWORK OF AMERICAN ALLIANCES WHICH ENDURE TO THIS DAY--THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION AND THE RIO TREATY FOR WESTERN HEMISPHERE SECURITY. PRESIDENT KENNEDY INHERITED FROM PRESIDENT EISENHOWER THE JOB OF CONTINUED STRENGTHENING OF THAT ALLIANCE AND OF COMMITMENTS TO AMERICA'S FRIENDS IN ASIA, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND LATIN AMERICA.

IN THE KENNEDY ERA, AMERICA EMERGED STRENGTHENED FROM THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS AND THE CONFRONTATION WITH THE SOVIET UNION. THE JOHNSON ERA, WITH THE ESCALATED VIETNAM WAR, BUT GREAT ADVANCES IN CIVIL RIGHTS LED INTO THE NIXON ERA OF SEEKING BETTER RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW AND PEKING. PRESIDENT FORD INHERITED THE FRAMEWORK FOR THOSE POLICIES FROM HIS PREDECESSOR WHO WAS FORCED OUT OF OFFICE BY WATERGATE. (OPT) AND MISTER FORD HAS CARRIED FORWARD THE POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH PEKING AND ENHANCED PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVED TIES WITH MOSCOW THROUGH THE STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION AGREEMENTS, WHICH NOW MUST WAIT FOR MISTER CARTER'S ADMINISTRATION TO MOVE AHEAD EVEN MORE. (END OPT)

WHAT THESE PERIODS OF TRANSITION HAVE DEMONSTRATED IS THAT REGARDLESS OF WHO WINS AN ELECTION IN AMERICA, THE NATION UNITES BEHIND ITS LEADERS, PARTICULARLY WHEN IT COMES TO FOREIGN POLICY. AS TO THIS TRANSITION, PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER PUT HIS FINGER ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ITS CIVILITY WHEN HE SAID: "I BELIEVE THAT THE TRANSITION WILL BE ONE WHICH WILL BE CONDUCTIVE TO PEACE IN OUR OWN NATION AND PEACE AROUND THE WORLD." AND PRESIDENT FORD, REITERATING HIS PLEDGE OF TOTAL COOPERATION, IMPLIED THIS STEMS FROM HIS CONVICTION THAT "WE ARE ALL INTERESTED IN WHAT IS BEST FOR THE UNITED STATES." THE WORDS OF THE TWO MEN EXEMPLIFY THE RESILIENCE OF THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.